



For Immediate Release
Contact: Peter Roessmann
Phone: (970) 945-8522, ext. 236

December 9, 2004

Elkhead Reservoir Releasing Water in Anticipation of Enlargement

CRAIG, CO – Water levels at Elkhead Reservoir are being drawn down to prepare for construction work on the reservoir's impending enlargement. Water is being released at about 150 cubic feet per second (cfs) to decrease the storage pool to levels where construction can begin as anticipated in March 2005. The draw down period will last approximately two months.

While the releases have brought Elkhead Creek up an additional 1.5 ft downstream of the reservoir, the flow is still substantially below what is typically experienced during spring run-off when the creek flows at 1,300cfs or more. Elkhead Creek normally flows at approximately 10cfs during the winter months.

Due to the receding elevation of the reservoir, it is necessary to close the reservoir and the surrounding State Park to all forms of recreation. The steadily decreasing water level is leaving behind unsafe ice conditions, prompting the closure. Enlargement project construction activities will occur at all the public access points to the park area necessitating its closure throughout the construction period. The park is scheduled to reopen to the public in the spring of 2007 with improved recreation facilities and a larger reservoir.

The enlargement of Elkhead Reservoir is a cooperative project designed to provide additional water for the recovery of endangered fish in the Yampa River and to permit continued human development of the region's water resources. The enlargement project, expected to cost around \$21 million, is a partnership of the Colorado River Water Conservation District, the City of Craig, the Craig Station Power Plant, the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and Colorado State Parks.

More information on the Elkhead Enlargement Project can be found on the Colorado River District's website at www.crwcd.gov/elkhead/index.html.

###